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NOTES AND NEWS.

VOODOOISM: IS IT A MYTH?—The mystery regarding the origin of the word "voodoo" is solved in Mr. Lea's important and scholarly History of the Inquisition, from which it appears (vol. 2, p. 158) that in the fifteenth century the Waldenses so completely monopolized the field of misbelief in the public mind that in France they gave a new name to sorcery, which became popularly known as *vauderie*, and witches as *vaudoises*. The author did not apparently recognize at once the association between these words and the familiar *voodoo*, but in a foot-note on page 519, vol. 3, he distinctly refers to it. That this pious and persecuted sect should have given their name to the hideous superstition of the French-American negroes is scarcely more strange than that the French lexicographers should have failed to detect this very clear connection, almost an obvious one in the French form of *vaudou*, which is nothing but *vaudois* with a negro thickening.

It is, perhaps, a result of this association of terms that leads Mr. W. W. Newell, in a striking article in the first number of the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, to discredit the existence of many of the revolting practices attributed to the French West Indian negroes in the statements of travelers regarding the voodoo cult. Undoubtedly the superstition in some form exists under that name. It has spread from Louisiana over the whole United States, as the police reports of Washington and other cities abundantly attest. But it is curious to follow Mr. Newell in tracing the close identity between the practices attributed by the orthodox French to the Waldensian heretics and those with which the black votaries of the voodoo mystery are charged by modern writers; child murder, cannibalism, the disinterment and mutilation of corpses, *loup-garou-ism*, are among the most horrible of these practices common to both. But, in addition to these, the same peculiarities of attire are noted and the same pretended supernatural powers. This close parallelism may excite a reasonable suspicion that, with the name, all that the vicious and hideous mediæval imagination had associated with it has been transported across the Atlantic by the colonists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that there is just the same foundation for

belief in these horrible practices as existed when bigotry and credulity and fear invented them.

Mr. Lea has shown forcibly how the enormous mass of details regarding the practices of alleged sorcerers and witches was accumulated as the result of examination by torture and how contradictory and untrustworthy is evidence thus procured. A vast system grew up, existing only in the imagination of the credulous, but in an age when credulity was in the ascendant—a system evil in every aspect, to take part in which was heresy, but none the less heresy to doubt its existence. So thoroughly implanted did it become in the belief of Europe that it survived the Reformation and crossed the Atlantic with the English Puritan to Massachusetts as well as with the French Buccaneer to Hayti. Examination by torture was short-lived in Salem, but it elicited the same kind of testimony as in France and as it has since done in the Black Republic. And Mr. Newell concludes that all the statements regarding the excesses of voodooism rest upon the same foundation as the confessions of the witches of Arras and of Salem.

It must be admitted that he makes a fair showing and excites reasonable doubt. But as yet it is only a doubt; all the testimony is not discredited and there is much to be brushed aside before his conclusions can be fully accepted. For the sake of humanity we should like to accept them; but we cannot forget the imitateness of the African, nor that the seeds of superstition brought from Europe and implanted in the minds of the West Indian slaves found a soil amazingly congenial. To these people, yet in their savage state, child murder and cannibalism were not particularly revolting. The stories of the Vaudois, told by the superstitious colonists, were well adapted to impress minds already schooled in notions of African sorcery; and in their savage orgies, to which, with the acquisition of the French speech, they gave the name they had learned, they may have sought to imitate the cruel rites of which they had heard. Who can venture to say that, unrestrained by civil authority or the dictates of humanity, they may not have actually realized in practice what had heretofore been only the product of the imagination of inquisitors, extorted from their victims in the agony of the rack?

Conceding the real value of Mr. Newell's paper, the question of the actual practices of voodooism must be regarded as an open one, and it is well worthy of more careful investigation than it has yet received.

F. A. S.

INDIAN ETYMOLOGIES.—The ingenious suggestion of Mr. Hewitt in the April number of THE ANTHROPOLOGIST—finding a possible origin of the word “Iroquois” in an Algonkin compound—certainly merits consideration. I have no desire to criticise it, but may be allowed to vindicate my own suggestion from the imputations of ignorance or carelessness, which his objections seem to imply. For this object it is not necessary to claim a profound knowledge of the Iroquois tongue, which is one of the most difficult of languages; but Mr. Hewitt, who has read my volume on the “Iroquois Book of Rites,” might, perhaps, have reasonably given the author credit for a more careful study of the first principles of the language than he seems willing to suppose. With reference to my suggested derivation of the word from the verbal form *ierokua*, “they who smoke” (reminding one of “The Tobacco People,” which was a well-known designation of a Huron tribe), Mr. Hewitt remarks: “I am not aware that *garokwa* is used as a verb in any of the Iroquoian tongues.” If he will refer to the volume just mentioned, he will find, on page 116 (par. 2), the word in question used as a verb in this native composition. The form here employed is *denighroghkwaïen*. Omitting the aspirates (here represented by *gh*)—which in Iroquois etymology can generally be neglected—and adopting the modern orthography of the French missionaries, we obtain the word *tenirokwaïenn*, meaning “let us two smoke,” and made up as follows: *teni*, we two (thou and I); *rokwa*, the “theme” of the noun *garokwa* or *karokwa*, pipe; *i*, a vowel inserted for euphony; and *en* (or *enn*), the terminal inflection of the present imperative, in the second conjugation. (See the “Études Philologiques” of Father Cuoq, p. 106.)

Mr. Hewitt further remarks that the supposed indeterminate form, if it existed, would mean not *they who smoke*, but *one smokes by which*. The indeterminate form, however, is constantly used with a plural signification. If he will refer to the glossary appended to the same volume he will find many instances of this use. The examples in the second conjugation are mostly in the future tense, indicated by the prefix *en* preceding the sign *ye* (*ie*) of the indeterminate form—as, *enyeharako*, they will carry it; *enyeken*, they will see; *enyenikonghkwendake*, they will be mourning, &c.

The manner in which Iroquois verbs are formed from nouns, and in turn yield nouns expressive of agency or condition, will be apparent in the inflections of the word *Kanonsionni*, the well-known name of the Iroquois confederacy. It means, literally, “the ex-

tended house," from *kanonsa*, house, and *ionni*, to extend or lengthen out. Replacing the noun-forming prefix *ka* by the verb-forming prefixes, we have, in the third person, singular and plural, *ranonsionni* and *rotinonsionni*, literally, "he (who) extends the house" and "they (who) extend the house," but understood to mean "he is an Iroquois," "they are Iroquois;" or, as nouns, simply, "an Iroquois," "the (pl.) Iroquois." *Rotinonsionni* becomes in the Seneca dialect (which lacks the *r*) *hotinonsionni*. This is the word written by L. H. Morgan (who did not profess to distinguish the niceties of Indian pronunciation) "*Hodensaunee*, and correctly translated by him "the Iroquois."

With regard to *iakwai*, the Cayuga word for "bear," which I also suggested as a possible source (from the name of the leading clan), Mr. Hewitt remarks that this word should "properly" be *niakwai*. It strikes me that such dogmatic corrections (made without giving an authority) are somewhat ungracious. My comparative vocabulary of the Iroquois languages has been prepared during many visits to the different tribes, and with repeated revisions to ensure its correctness. The word for "bear" in Mohawk—which doubtless most nearly represents the original form of the Iroquois speech—is *ohkwari*. In Onondaga (which drops the *r*) this becomes *ohkwai*; in Cayuga it is altered to *iakwai*, and in Seneca it is commonly heard as *niakwai*. The change, it will be seen, becomes greater, as is usual in these dialects, the farther we go from the primary source. As some Cayugas are now living among the Senecas, it is likely enough that the two nearly allied dialects may have become, to some extent, confounded.

In spite of the labors and example of such scholars as Duponceau, Gallatin, and Pickering, and of their well-known successors in our time, the great value of the American languages in philological science is still but imperfectly appreciated. The number who pursue their study is unfortunately far too small, and the accession of able and zealous investigators like Mr. Hewitt is to be heartily welcomed. I would venture to suggest, however, that we can all find ample fields for original research without wasting our time in minute verbal criticisms of the work of our fellow-students.

H. HALE.

SUICIDE.—The following results of a careful study of the statistical laws of suicide, according to the latest documents, are taken by

Professor Stanley Hall from the work of Professor Morselli, of Milan :

The regularity of increase in the number of suicides is much greater than the increase of population. The larger the town the greater the annual increase. The yearly variations depend on social and economic changes, on the weather, and on natural phenomena. The two zones of greatest frequency of suicide are the centre of the German population and Northern France. From these in all directions the frequency of suicide decreases, like waves from a stone thrown in the water. This geographical scheme repeats itself on a smaller scale for other smaller centres, the great cities exhibiting, of course, the largest percentage, these latter and race being the chief factors. Spring, summer, winter, autumn, is the series which represents decreasing numbers of suicides, June being the month of most and December of least frequency.

Suicides increase with culture and civilization. In Italy about twice as many suicides occur in cities as in the country. The state of religious consciousness has a great influence on the tendency to suicide, which is strongest among Protestants; then follow Catholics, Jews, Mohammedans, fetish-worshippers, in decreasing series. Men are about four times as likely to commit suicide as women, but the percentage of women to men is greater in spring and summer, and of men to women in fall and winter. Each race and nation has its peculiarities in this regard.

Liability to suicide increases regularly with age, and reaches its maximum with women earlier than with men, being great for both about the involuntary period. Unmarried life, especially the states of widowhood and divorce, favors suicide, family life tending strongly against it, and widowers are more exposed to it than widows. Children are one of the greatest protections, especially for women. The well-to-do classes are more exposed than the poor. Among vocations, soldiers, and of them the older subordinate officers, exhibit the highest percentage. The means of suicide vary regularly with the season of the year, race, climate, and culture. In Russia, Norway, and Prussia hanging is decreasing and drowning increasing. In Denmark, Belgium, Holland, and France the reverse tendency is exhibited. Death by fire-arms is steadily increasing; by charcoal fumes, decreasing in France and increasing in the west of Europe, especially in great cities. In northern lands hanging is the mode of death in three-fourths of all cases, while in the south drowning is

more the fashion. Italians often precipitate themselves from high places and Anglo-Saxons often stab themselves. More painful and uncertain modes of death are rapidly declining. In Italy men choose fire-arms, women drowning. In Austria men prefer hanging. Unmarried women and servants resort to poison, and in each land each age has its preferred mode of death.

Suicide is largely an index of social misery, and corrective influences are to be sought in the reform of moral ideas and a better equilibrium between human needs and the means of development.

LINGUISTIC MAP.—At the 130th meeting of the Anthropological Society, January 3, 1888, Mr. Henshaw exhibited a linguistic map of that portion of North America to the north of Mexico, including the peninsula of Lower California, and read a paper in explanation of it. He stated that the total number of distinct linguistic families represented on the map is sixty.

He summarized the more important deductions derivable from the data upon which the map was based, or that are suggested by it, as follows:

(1.) That the North American Indian tribes, instead of speaking related dialects which have originated in a single, parent language, in reality speak many languages belonging to very distinct families which have no apparent unity of origin.

(2.) That the Indian population of North America was greatly exaggerated by early writers and instead of being large was in reality comparatively small, and furthermore that the population had nowhere augmented sufficiently, except possibly in California, to press upon the food supply.

(3.) That although representing a small population the numerous tribes had overspread North America and had possessed themselves of all the territory, which almost everywhere was owned in common by the tribe.

(4.) That prior to the advent of the European the tribes were probably nearly in a state of equilibrium and were in the main sedentary, and not nomadic, and that those tribes which can be said with propriety to have been nomadic became so only after the advent of the European and largely as the direct result of the acquisition of the horse and the introduction of fire-arms.

(5.) That, while agriculture was general among the tribes of the

eastern United States and while it was spreading among western tribes, it nowhere was practiced sufficiently to emancipate the Indian wholly from the hunter state.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE FIRE-SYRINGE.—Some years ago it was discovered that air and other gases give up a large amount of heat when forced into smaller compass. It was found that tinder could be ignited by means of a device made on this principle, and the invention was called a "Pyrophorus," or by the less classical name of fire-syringe. It is made as follows: A tube of glass closed at one end is fitted tightly with a plunger. The plunger, to the end of which is fastened a piece of tinder or a pledget of cotton dipped in bisulphide of carbon, is inserted into the tube and driven down by a sharp blow, then quickly withdrawn, when it will be found that the tinder is glowing.

This invention was put on the market as a method of getting fire prior to 1832, when friction-matches were invented, and it entered into competition with flint and steel, the phosphorus bottle, and the various pyrogens of that period. I am told that a pyrophorus made of pewter was in use in parts of New England many years ago, but no doubt it was regarded more as a curious toy than as a useful means of generating fire.

Seemingly anomalous is the fact that the head-hunting Saribus Dyaks of Borneo use this mechanical toy for the purpose of procuring fire (*Jour. Anthropol. Inst. Gt. Brit. and Ireland*, XV, p. 426). The Dyak appliance is a small brass tube lined with lead; they say no other metal will produce the effect. A wooden plunger fits the tube tightly, the end of which is hollowed out for the reception of a piece of tinder.

The Kakhyens of Burmah also use the fire-syringe, made of a solid cylinder of buffalo horn, with a central bore three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter and three inches deep burned into it. The piston is made of iron-wood (*Scientific American Supp.* 508, p. 8107).

It would, probably, be unsafe to class this very unusual mode of getting fire as a barbarous invention without further investigation and its discovery in other regions. It should be stated that the most common method of obtaining fire, both in Burmah and Borneo, which may be characterized as the Malay method, is by rubbing a stick in a groove in another stick.

The use of the pyrophorus in Burmah is another link in the chain of evidence connecting the Malays of the islands and the inhabitants of the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Col. Henry Yule argues for this connection and cites the distribution of the double bellows as one of the proofs (*Jour. Anthropol. Inst. Great Britain*, IX, p. 290). Evidence has been accumulating on this point for some years, and it may now be considered as proven that Indo-China was a center whence peoples dispersed over the innumerable islands of the Pacific.

WALTER HOUGH.

WOMAN'S SHARE IN EARLY CULTURE.—In a Saturday Lecture, delivered in the National Museum on April 28, Professor Mason took the ground that Mr. Spencer's division of culture into militancy and industrialism would apply even more aptly to sex occupations. Man's work from the first was essentially militant; woman's work, industrial. Men were first and are now soldiers, miners, hunters, fishermen, woodmen, &c., going to Nature and seizing her productions. Women were the conservers of the results of men's labors, and were the first tanners, shoemakers, clothiers, toymakers, milliners, architects, upholsterers, cooks, common carriers, agriculturists, millers, spinners, weavers, potters, decorative artists, &c. Indeed they seem to have been the inventors of the majority of our peaceful elaborative industries.

The distinction of militancy and industrialism was traced through human occupations, languages, social structure, and religions.

With respect to language it was maintained that women were the inventors of the terms relating to their own arts, and, since their work was expended on material furnished by men and upon comforts demanded by them, the woman's vocabulary was, in all probability, richer than that of man.

Socially, her share in romantic love, in establishing the gentile system, in the development of the highest virtues through prolonged maturity, her natural rôle of conserver, and her personal influence in cases well authenticated by travelers elevate her far above the conditions of drudge and slave in which she is often painted.

The natural anthropomorphic tendencies in religion were shown to have followed woman to the spirit world in her conception of it and in man's conception of the women dwelling there. She ap-

pears as mother, lover, Fates, dispenser of slain game, of corn, of home comforts, &c., just as she was in her life on earth.

The primitive conception of a Creator of all things would seem to have originated in the mind of women at their occupations or to have been suggested by men observing women at work. The potter fashioning clay, the primitive architect uprearing her lodge on poles, the weaver arranging the warp and weft of things—these are the metaphors that crowd all mythologies and indicate to us how the Divine Maker first became conceivable to mankind.

THOMAS HAMPSON.

The announcement is made with profound sorrow of the death of Mr. Thomas Hampson, the late editor of this journal, at Washington, on the 23d of last April. An extended account of his life and services will soon appear in the publication of the U. S. Geological Survey with which he had been connected for several years. Meanwhile it is proper to present to our readers the following resolutions adopted at the meeting of the Anthropological Society of Washington held May 1, 1888:

WHEREAS our friend and fellow-member THOMAS HAMPSON has ended his career among us in the early prime of life, and whereas it is fitting that expression be given to our feelings upon this sorrowful event: Therefore,

Resolved, That in his death the community sustains a severe loss; that the Government loses an energetic, zealous, and faithful servant; that the Society, in its twofold loss of counselor and editor of its journal, loses one whose ability, learning, skill, and tact it will be difficult to replace.

Resolved, That his death is regarded as a personal loss to the members of this Society, who esteemed him as a warm-hearted man, a candid, magnanimous friend, and a most valuable coadjutor and adviser.

Resolved, That our sympathy and condolence are hereby proffered to the widow and family of the deceased, and that we unite with them in mourning his untimely death.